

## **SEABEES DOING MONUMENTAL THINGS**

By PN2 David R. Bowman

It's one of the first things you see upon arrival to the "Isle of Spice" in Grenada. Immediately upon exiting the Grenada Int'l Airport, there is a concrete, double-arched monument that stands approximately 50 feet tall. Dedicated by President Ronald Reagan on February 20, 1986, the monument is a constant reminder of those who gave their lives in Operation "URGENT FURY". While simple in both look and design, the meaning of the monument speaks volumes for the Grenadian people. It represents their ability to overcome adversity and the successful triumph over unwanted forces. Unfortunately, while it has great symbolic meaning, like every other monument ever made, it has weathered some tough times and has been basically untouched for almost 18 years. Despite the weathering over time, the monument is in pretty good shape with some structural concerns. "Time and the weather have taken their toll on it," admitted BU1 (SCW) Jonathan Poellot, crew leader for the restoration crew. "It is amazing that it has stood over that amount of time, given its constant exposure to the weather as well as the close proximity to the ocean. But, this is nothing a little bit of care and Seabee magic can't fix."

The monument is a lasting memorial to both American and Grenadian soldiers who, after 29 days of conflict, liberated the island of Grenada from the Communist Party of Cuba. Officially, the United States lost 19 men in the operation, which also claimed the lives of 49 Grenadians and 29 Cubans, hundreds more of which were wounded. "It's basically a symbol of freedom and I like that," BU2 (SCW) Christopher Ware declared. "I just hope that it will stand for another 20 years." The Seabees are restoring the monument in preparation for Thanksgiving Day, November 25<sup>th</sup>, which commemorates their liberation as a result of the Operation.

Thanks to the hard work of 4 dedicated Seabees, that statement will ring true for many more years to come.



CE2(SCW) Rob Gibson applies a concrete bonder/fortifier to the Grenadian Liberation Monument, St. George's, Grenada.



BU1(SCW) Jon Poellot and BU2(SCW) Christopher Ware apply cargo straps and wood to maintain the concrete's shape.



The Grenadian Liberation Monument being prepped for restoration by NMCB ONE, DFT Grenada Personnel.